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TSPL
SUBJECT: EU ENVIRONMENT COMMISSIONER EAGER TO ENHANCE
COOPERATION

¶1. (SBU) The Charge d'Affaires met with EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas on February 9. Dimas said that he looks forward to working with President Obama's climate team toward an international agreement. He realizes that "the transition will take a bit more time" and does not underestimate the difficulties, but he is optimistic about the prospects for Copenhagen. He welcomed the President's long-term target of 80 percent emission reductions by 2050 noting "it is the same as the EU's; mid-term targets can be discussed."

¶2. (SBU) "If we work together" he said, "we can bring China and India on board." China's participation will be necessary for an effective international agreement. Dimas participated in a meeting with China's Premier Wen Jiabao and met separately with NDRC Chairmen Zhang Ping on January 31 during their visit to Brussels. Dimas reported that China continues to emphasize that the focus should be on per capita and not overall emissions. The Chinese officials also stressed that the one child policy has also minimized greenhouse gas emissions. Dimas said China will be difficult, but added Russia will be more difficult. (Note: Dimas was part of a delegation of Commissioners that visited Russia on February 6 for high-level talks. End note.) Citing the President, he said "we have to listen to them, engage them and stress that it is their planet too," but to get them to commit themselves, "financing will be necessary."

¶3. (SBU) The Charge identified three priorities that we hear from the Europeans with regard to the Transatlantic relationship: the Middle East peace process, climate change/energy security, and free trade. He said that the President has spoken out consistently, since the campaign and afterward, about the importance of climate change and the environment. He has appointed a distinguished team of leaders in these areas. The Charge suggested that Dimas' experience during the difficult negotiations on the EU's Climate and Energy legislation may be useful for U.S. policy makers who may want to examine prospects for cap and trade legislation. He encouraged Dimas to meet with his counterparts, but suggested the time may not be ripe now, as the new administration is still settling in. Given Dimas' recent meetings with senior Chinese officials, the Charge noted that a phone call to the Special Envoy for Climate Change might be useful for both sides.

¶4. (SBU) Dimas welcomed the Charge's suggestions. He said he will be available to visit Washington once the new team has settled in. He looks forward to meeting with his counterparts to discuss how we can "advance our mutual

objectives."

MURRAY

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